

## A Home for the Snow by Rosy\_el

**Series:** [The Sunshine Boy and the Snowflake Girl \[9\]](#)

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** F/M

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Karen Wheeler, Mike Wheeler

**Relationships:** Eleven & Mike Wheeler

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2016-10-18

**Updated:** 2016-10-18

**Packaged:** 2022-04-01 21:28:08

**Rating:** Not Rated

**Warnings:** No Archive Warnings Apply

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 1,034

**Publisher:** [archiveofourown.org](http://archiveofourown.org)

**Summary:**

It took Jim about four whole seconds to process what he was seeing.

“She’s back,” he murmured.

## A Home for the Snow

### Author's Note:

I love Jim Hopper.

November, 1984

It took Jim about four whole seconds to process what he was seeing.

Groggy-eyed and a little bit hungover, Chief Jim Hopper had cussed his way to the front door, where *some jackass* wouldn't stop pounding on it. It was only 8:36 on a Sunday morning.

He ripped the door open, mouth ajar ready to yell but came to a complete stop upon what stood on his porch. Karen Wheeler, hair soaked from the rain and clad in a frilly yellow apron, Mike Wheeler, red-eyed and smiling, and behind them? Jim couldn't tear his eyes from the girl.

Eleven. She had on a huge t-shirt and sweats (courtesy of Mike Wheeler's closet) and held onto Mike's hand like she'd float up into the sky otherwise.

"She's back," he murmured to no one in particular.

Karen Wheeler looked scared, brown eyes wide and mouth drawn tight. "We need to come in right now, Jim."

He nodded his head absentmindedly, then realized he was only wearing a white shirt and plaid boxer shorts. "Oh damn, give me a second," he opened the door wider to let them in as he turned to get some pants. Jim suddenly felt grateful his little trailer was remotely tidy. He had hardly smoked and rarely kept beer in the house after that week in November the year previous. Though his daughter was still present in his mind every day, Sarah's memory didn't seem to haunt him any longer. It was like breathing life into Will Byers had redeemed Sarah somehow. But as he walked back out into the living room, jeans and blue flannel now safely on, and watched El, still clinging to that Michael Wheeler boy, he felt in the pit of his stomach

that Sarah needed a bit more redeeming.

Karen put a gentle arm on Mike's elbow, "Honey, why don't you go take El to the porch, okay? Chief Hopper and I need to talk about some things, alright?" Her soft smile put the two children at ease and Mike nodded, pulling at El's hand slowly.

"Let's go outside, okay, El?" Mike said it mildly, like a certain decibel of sound would make El start to cry. And maybe it would; the girl looked nothing but shaken. But she just nodded and followed, a light in her brown eyes that made Jim feel warm.

Karen rubbed her palms on her apron, eyes distant for a moment. "Jim. This girl—I still don't know everything that happened a year ago. I talked to Mike and Nancy and Joyce so much, I tried so hard, but I just don't think they told me everything." She wiped at her eyes, which Jim now realized were filled with tears. "Mike cried himself to sleep every night for months, Jim. I still hear him wake up from nightmares down the hall! And now—" She cast her eyes in the direction of the front door, which hung open. Mike and El sat on the front step. "This little girl just reappears out of thin air?" She shook her head. "I don't know who she is or what she's done," a single tear spilled over her lashes. "But she needs to stay—somewhere safe this time. She—" Karen reached for Jim's hand and clutched it. "You should've seen Mike when she knocked on the door, Jim. It was like *my* baby boy came home when she showed up. For the past *year* he just hasn't been the same." Another tear fell.

Jim found himself nodding, eyes still on the back of El's head from her place on the stoop. "I'll take her."

The words left his mouth before his brain had even thought them.

"Jim." Karen's voice brought him back down to earth. There was a sad look on her face. "Jim, are you sure you should do that?" Her voice was soft and careful. "I know you've had a hard time since..." her words wandered. "I can't *imagine* what you've gone through. But is taking on another little girl something that you can handle?" They could hear the hum of Mike's voice in the distance. He was telling El some sort of story, talking with his hands and smiling. Jim watched. "This is an adolescent child we're talking about here, with no family,

no name—”

“She’s got a name, Karen.” Jim spoke smoothly.

“Jim,” her hand was again on his. Everything Karen Wheeler did seemed motherly. Her eyes were filled with compassion and kindness as she looked at Jim Hopper. “She needs a family. She needs structure and stability and damn it, the girl needs *love*.”

Chief Hopper thought back on the week exactly a year before. He had spent days tracking down this skinny girl with a buzzed head. Her hair hung past her ears now. Jim should’ve known something was up. The food he had left in the box in the woods had been untouched last night. He couldn’t explain how he had to come to it or how he knew to fill it up, but it was like he was pulled to it. And every time he’d open it to fill it with waffles or chicken or sandwiches or candy, the food he had left the day before was gone. Not even a crumb left behind.

Jim smiled lightly. “Yeah, she does need all of that. She needs *me*, Karen. She needs to be with me, here.”

Karen quirked an eyebrow up and glanced around slightly. “Okay,” Jim cut in, “maybe not *here*. I can find a better place, that’s no issue. But this is something I need to do, Karen. You know that, don’t you?”

Jim could see Karen’s mind turning, hands again rubbing circles on her apron. Shut her eyes and breathed out. “Okay, Jim.” They both looked out the front door at El. “*You’re that little girl’s dad now*. You should get the papers started right away.” Her eyes flitted around the marginally messy trailer. “And you should start checking the classifieds for some houses, too.”

Eleven turned around and looked at Karen and then at Jim. *He was a dad again*. And it scared the hell out of him in the best way.

### **Author’s Note:**

Feelings?? I’m going to get into the box in the woods a bit later so hold on for that! Also, THANK YOU

FOR ALL YOUR KUDOS AND COMMENTS. I love to write but there's nothing more exciting than seeing people love your writing. So thank you.

\*\*\*ALSO IF YOU HAVE A SNAPCHAT I AM ON THE CAMPUS MIDTERM HORROR STORY!! I go to BYU and my snap is Stranger Things inspired so go watch it, LOL! My roommate and I screamed this morning when we saw it on the national story. Because we're pathetic and this is our own claim to fame.

-Rosy